

REMARKS

Re-examination and allowance of the present application is respectfully requested.

Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's 35 U.S.C. §103 rejection of claims 2-9 and 14-23 as being obvious over U.S. Patent 5,970,444 to HAYASHI et al., in view of U.S. Patent 5,187,745 to YIP and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,293,449 to TZENG. Applicants also respectfully traverse the Examiner's 35 U.S.C. §103 rejection of claims 10-13, 24 and 25 as being obvious over HAYASHI et al., in view of YIP and further in view of TZENG and U.S. Patent 5,826,226 to OZAWA.

Applicants submit that HAYASHI is not a valid reference. Applicants note that HAYASHI was filed on March 11, 1998. However, the instant application is a divisional application of U.S. Application No. 09/101,186, which was filed on July 6, 1998. The '186 U.S. Application was a U.S. National Stage Application of PCT Application PCT/JP97/04033, which was filed on November 6, 1997. It is noted that the PCT application (and the U.S. applications) claimed the benefit of four (4) Japanese applications, two (2) of which were filed in February, 1996, and two (2) of which were filed in November, 1996.

At the time of the filing of the '186 U.S. National Stage application (e.g., on July 6, 1998), Applicants filed a verified English language translation of the PCT application. A copy of the verified English language translation of the PCT application may be found in the parent '186 application. Accordingly, Applicants submit that it is not necessary to submit

another copy of the verified English language translation in the present application in order to perfect their earlier date.

However, should the Examiner wish to have a copy of the verified English language translation for the instant application, he is requested to contact Applicants' U.S. counsel at the below-listed telephone number, who will provide the Examiner with a copy, along with a copy of the date-stamped filing receipt evidencing its filing in the parent '186 U.S. National Stage application.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that their date pre-dates that of HAYASHI, and thus, HAYASHI is not a valid reference. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103 is inappropriate, and respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections.

Applicants note that no other substantive prior art rejection has been applied. Accordingly, Applicants believe that the claims are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request such an indication from the Examiner.

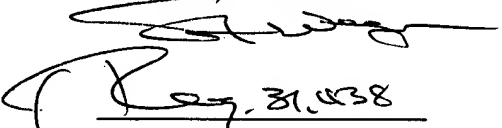
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In view of the fact that the art of record, whether considered alone or in combination, fails to disclose or suggest the present invention, as defined by the pending claims, and in further view of the above remarks, reconsideration of the Examiner's action and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested and are believed to be appropriate.

Should the Commissioner determine that an extension of time is required in order to render this response timely and/or complete, a formal request for an extension of time, under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a), is herewith made in an amount equal to the time period required to render this response timely and/or complete. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any required extension of time fee under 37 C.F.R. §1.17 to Deposit Account No. 19-0089.

If there should be any questions concerning this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
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